

FORT PECK TRIBES

Assiniboine & Sioux

EXHIBIT 2
DATE Feb. 9, 2015
HB 314

February 5, 2015

Representative Nancy Ballance

Chair, House Appropriations

Dear Chairwoman Ballance,

I am writing to express support for House Bill 314: Expand Montana Schools of Promise.

As a **Tribal Council Member for the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes and a Trustee for the Brockton Public Schools**, I know firsthand how much this kind of approach with students and schools is needed. Youth in my community often have many struggles that can make it hard for them to come to school, and to learn. The strategies that HB 314 recommends are greatly needed.

In particular, Graduation Coach and Wraparound Coach.

A graduation coach can be the critical link in a struggling students' life. As research has shown, it can often take just one caring adult to make a difference in a youth's life, and a graduation coach can be that person. Whether it is helping with school work, or getting to school, or connecting with other programs and services, a graduation coach can have a huge impact in a child's life.

The wraparound process has been implemented in the Frazer Community on our reservation and greatly benefitted that community. The Wraparound component of Schools of Promise provided their students and their families with an option to utilize the wraparound process. Through the process, youth and families are empowered to become more aware of their own identified needs and can better utilize their innate strength to set their own goals to improve their lives. This proved very beneficial to the community as a whole and it proved worthwhile by their academic scores. We would like to see the expansion of this as well as the other components of the Schools of Promise to other schools within our reservation whom we very dearly care about concerning reaching higher academic levels.

The Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribal Council took an important step this past term by creating an Education Committee to address the shortfalls being created by the constant decline in funding for the schools and rising costs of educating the youth. In creating the committee we then expanded our Tribal Education Department to include west-end and east-end liaison officers on the reservation to work with the schools in determining where our Native American children need assistance. As a major decision in keeping our youth in school till the mandated age of 18 the Tribes have created a Truancy Court to address the responsibility of the guardians/parents ensuring the attendance of the students.

I believe that as a school board member of the Brockton Public School District and Tribal Councilmember of the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes, there have been proven leadership attempts at our level to address our shortfalls in reaching AYP and now look at our State Leaders to join in extra efforts to assist us in our attempts to raise our enrolled members academic levels to reach AYP.

I thank you for your time, and I urge your support for HB 314.

Sincerely,


Melvin Terry RattlingThunder, Sr.



CROW TRIBAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM

February 5, 2015

Representative Nancy Ballance
Chair, House Appropriations

Dear Chairwoman Ballance,

I am writing to express support for House Bill 314: Expand Montana Schools of Promise.

As a newly hired Domestic Violence Coordinator & previous Youth Empowerment Coordinator, I know firsthand how much this kind of approach with students and schools is needed. Youth in my community often have many struggles that can make it hard for them to come to school, and to learn. The strategies that HB 314 recommends are greatly needed.

In particular, the wraparound process has been of great benefit to our communities on the Crow Reservation. As a Youth Empowerment Coordinator, I had the opportunity to work with students in Plenty Coups High School & Wyola Public School as a member of the Wraparound Team. This program provided services in communities where youth & families in need have no access to resources due to remote locations and also transportation issues to get to services. The Wraparound component of Schools of Promise provides our students and their families with an option to utilize the wraparound process. Through the process, youth and families are empowered to become more aware of their own identified needs and can better utilize their innate strength to set their own goals to improve their lives. We would like to see the expansion of this as well as the other components of the Schools of Promise.

I thank you for your time, and I urge your support for HB 314.

Sincerely,



Valerie Falls Down, CADC II
Crow Tribal Domestic Violence Coordinator

VIOLENCE

has **NEVER** been a
Native American
tradition

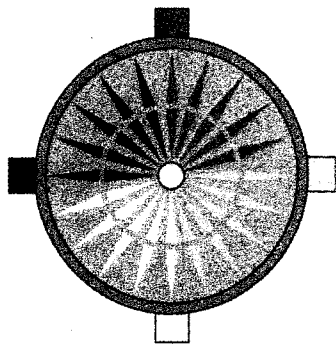


Crow Tribal
DV Program
P.O. Box 159
Crow Agency, Mt
59022

PHONE 406-679-2949

FAX 406-638-7413

EMAIL Valerie.Fallsdown@crow-nsn.gov



SECOND SEASON

Cradle to Career Opportunities for Native Youth

February 5, 2015

Representative Nancy Ballance

Chair, House Appropriations

Dear Chairwoman Ballance,

I am writing to express support for House Bill 314: Expand Montana Schools of Promise.

As the *Second Season Executive Director of a small nonprofit located in Lame Deer Montana*, I work in the trenches on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and understand the dire need for increasing wraparound facilitators in the schools. Our youth have numerous complicated and intense issues that need to be address and supported before they can to become academic achievers. As in many impoverished areas, basic needs are not being met therefore, it is impossible to expect achievement of our children. Currently in our community there is a circle of trauma that is surrounding our children and our youth are provided little outlets to address these intense needs. Our children have the intellect to strengthen our community, state and government but are not receiving the one person and the village of support to make these changes which in turn will keep us in this cycle for generations to come. The strategies that HB 314 recommends are desperately needed.

The *wraparound facilitator* is the marriage of the two concepts "it only takes one person to change a youth's life" and "it takes a village to raise a child." The wraparound facilitator is the one central person the youth can call upon and the facilitator's job is to create the village through developing a team of people for the youth. This process is not only the most effective but the most culturally appropriate. The Wraparound component of Schools of Promise provides our students and their families with an option to utilize the wraparound process. Through the process, youth and families are empowered to become more aware of their own identified needs and can better utilize their innate strength to set their own goals to improve their lives. We would like to see the expansion of this as well as the other components of the Schools of Promise.

I thank you for your time, and I urge your support for HB 314.

Sincerely,

Lacey Alexander-Small
Executive Director
Second Season

✧ NEEDS ASSESSMENTS ✧ TUTORING ✧ MENTORING ✧ COLLEGE PREP ✧ CAREER COUNSELING ✧ PARENTING SKILLS ✧

P.O. Box 315 Lame Deer, MT 59043

406.740.0236 or 406.592.3580

www.secondseason.org